

\vn\RNplan  
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Nixon's war policy was plagued by the belief that the war was winnable. This belief was not shared by the public, which didn't believe the war was winnable at any cost, or at any rate any cost they were willing to pay.

I believe the public would have been skeptical about Nixon's plan. The question arises, in any case: Why did Nixon feel the plan had to be secret from the public? Why did he not consider making it more public? After all, Laird was strongly in favor of making the Cambodian bombing public, in early 1969. Not only did Nixon not agree--why not?--but it was his concern about the Beecher leak that led to the wiretaps (which ultimately led to the dismissal of my trial! And precisely, not because I was overheard, but because the taps were not in the filing system, even the more secret one! And because they had been removed even from Hoover's file, and no one at first knew where they were! Because of their blackmail value to Hoover!)

Thus the super-secrecy of the policy led directly to the dismissal of my trial, and less directly to Nixon's downfall. Indeed, it was his actions against me to preserve the secrecy of his policy, even as late as 1971 and 1972, May 3, that led more or less directly to his downfall!

Why did Laird think they could get away with open bombing? Why did Nixon (and Kissinger?) disagree? How was Laird going to rationalise the Cambodian bombing?

Discuss with Hersh. I haven't seen any commentary on this. He had reason not to disclose it during the campaign, but why once he was in?

Was it the nuclear threat that he thought was too controversial? So that it had to be presented as a fait accompli; or even, Nixon may have hoped it would be effective without ever having to be disclosed (even though a threat that apparently could not be disclosed to the American public would be less credible to the DRV than an open threat that did not evoke too much controversy. Still, the DRV could fear that if it were carried out as a fait accompli it would get enough support, as Nixon expected: if it were successful quickly. But both N and DRV could guess that if several bombs were needed, it would not get enough support. And this was especially true in the context of the Moratorium. Thus, the antiwar movement, first, compelled secrecy for the plan; and this came to doom it, through N's actions to preserve secrecy. And, in October and November, the antiwar movement made it clear to Nixon that: a) several bombs would be needed (because of Hanoi's hopes, encouraged by the antiwar movement); (though in reality, this effect was not critical; Hanoi would have held out even without



any antiwar movement. Thus, there may have been some effect, but it was not necessary or critical. It didn't make any difference).  
 b) public would not allow a number of bombs over time.

Anyway, this belief that the war was winnable kept drawing Nixon onward. It was the thought that he himself would feel a failure, would reproach himself, if he failed to get terms as good as he thought were available with this threat-strategy. Even if the public didn't berate him, he would reproach himself; "it would be wrong" to settle for less than he could have gotten, by means he was willing to use even if public wasn't.

So far, this is speculative. Too bad I couldn't get confirmation from Nixon himself, or Haldeman. HAK will never talk. Colson? Haig? Young? Lake?! Morris? Lord? Watts, Lynn?

Thus, Nixon's downfall from belief that war was "patently winnable," he felt sure that he could win it, fast (Haldeman. See his full diaries).

Compare his feeling that he couldn't reveal his deal before the election in 1972, for fear of losing support from Wallace hawks; but also, he probably wanted himself to see what he could get from further bombing. He didn't want to quit without having tried it; as MHH predicted in 1969., without having "everything that he could."

He also feared reproach from Thieu. And he wanted to demonstrate to Thieu that he had done everything; and would renew bombing if necessary. Look up Hung-Schechter book for evidence.

Thus his actions throughout his term, in 1969 and again in 1972, were an example of "fear of anticipated reproach, of shame."

He did think his goal was more modest than that of LBJ. It was; but it wasn't any more attainable!

Note that the superior may not want to be seen as having rejected a certain proposal. But the subordinate doesn't want to be seen, either, as having made a proposal that was rejected: in the eyes of his own subordinates or rivals, people who might draw harmful inferences from this lack of influence.

Thus, both superior and subordinate can converge on a desire to suppress the fact that a proposal was made; it may be withdrawn. See WPBundy in 1964, on "shooting way out of saloon." McNamara-Rusk in 1961, on sending combat units. (CIA suppressing evidence of planning for assassinations).

See movie, "City Hall": big cover-up involves suppressing all evidence that a probation officer recommended 10 to 20 years for a dope dealer, who subsequently was, instead, given probation by a judge. Later the dope dealer, tied to Mafia leader, out on probation, shoots a policeman and a little boy. The policeman was trying to get evidence that the judge had been influenced; as he was, by the mayor, Pacino, as a favor to the Brooklyn boss, who was doing a favor for the Mafia. The fact that the judge rejected a proposal for a prison sentence would have given away the whole chain; so it all had to be covered up, by forgery, lies, murders...

Compare JFK decision not to send combat units in 1961... Secrecy on Ball and Clifford recommendations in 1965. and on JCS recommendations in 1964-65. Westy proposal of 1967, and 1968 (leaks).

Secrets of PP: not so much, what Pres did (eventually known) as: what the President rejected, what was recommended by high authorities, and covered up, and why.

In City Hall, issue was not so much what judge did--that he could present as a "mistake," which he "regretted intensely, daily," a "tragedy"...as what was actually recommended and rejected, the rejection suggesting the possibility of criminal influence, untoward considerations, a crime, sin... (see \moral\wrong)

See extrication proposal in Options Paper. They didn't even want to be seen as having considered a certain option. Nor to have rejected it.

Thus, a phone-call before "recommendations" are formally proposed may determine both: a) what recommendation will be; b) what options were even considered.

Conversely, they may want to appear to have considered an option which in reality was never really considered seriously, and choice may really have been made in advance.

F-111, FX. etc. Or McG to LBJ in 1965: You will want to consider Ball and Bill Bundy options, and reject them.